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**CONTACT:**

**Dr. Amber L. Wilson, IACE, ASC**

Manager of Aviation Technology

804.236.3630

aviationtechnology@doav.virginia.gov

**Virginia Department of Aviation Signs Skyward, A Verizon company as VA-FIX User**  
*Company is First FAA-approved USS LAANC Provider to Sign Agreement*

**Richmond** — The Virginia Department of Aviation (DOAV) signed Skyward, A Verizon company, as the first Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)-approved Unmanned Aerial Systems Service Supplier (USS) as a user of the Virginia Flight Information Exchange (VA-FIX).

“We are excited that Skyward will become a user of the Virginia Flight Information Exchange,” said Virginia’s Director of Transportation Research and Innovation **Cathy McGhee**. “Skyward’s partnership to test VA-FIX demonstrates the value to industry and remote pilots of having a managed, designated source for data.”

VA-FIX is a platform for state and local government agencies to publish and share Unmanned Aerial System (UAS), or drone, advisory information with each other, UAS Service Suppliers, unmanned system operators, and the public to promote transparency and public safety. The pilot program, which launched in August and is the first of its kind in the industry, is evaluating the benefits of data-sharing, informing thoughtful regulation, and demonstrating a state-supported approach to UAS communications and coordination.

“The Virginia Department of Aviation is thrilled to on-board Skyward as our first FAA-approved Low Altitude Authorization and Notification Capability (LAANC) UAS Service Supplier to the VA-FIX,” said **Dr. Amber L. Wilson**, DOAV manager of aviation technology. “In addition to being a national provider of USS, Skyward is also a national provider of Unmanned Traffic Management (UTM) services. Virginia is committed to transparency and openness in our airspace while supporting safety and awareness. VA-FIX is a great demonstration of what can happen when multiple stakeholders collaborate for the benefit of the Commonwealth, the public and industry.”

“We look forward to working with the Virginia Department of Aviation as we test integrating the VA-FIX with Skyward’s drone airspace map,” said **Dave Lincoln**, UAS Strategic Initiatives Manager for Skyward. “It’s a promising and innovative model to elevate the security of localities and infrastructure while providing drone pilots additional operational intelligence and local zoning information.”

For the second consecutive year, Virginia has earned the #1 ranking for Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) by Business Facilities magazine.

**The Department of Aviation’s mission is to:**

- Develop an advanced aviation system that is safe, secure, and fosters economic development;
- Build an appreciation by the public for the importance of aviation and to inspire the next generation of aviation professionals; and
- Provide safe and highly efficient flight services for the Commonwealth’s leadership and state agencies.

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Virginia Department of Aviation • 5702 Gulfstream Road • Richmond, VA 23250-2422

Phone (804) 236-3624 • Fax (804) 236-3635 • [www.doav.virginia.gov](http://www.doav.virginia.gov)